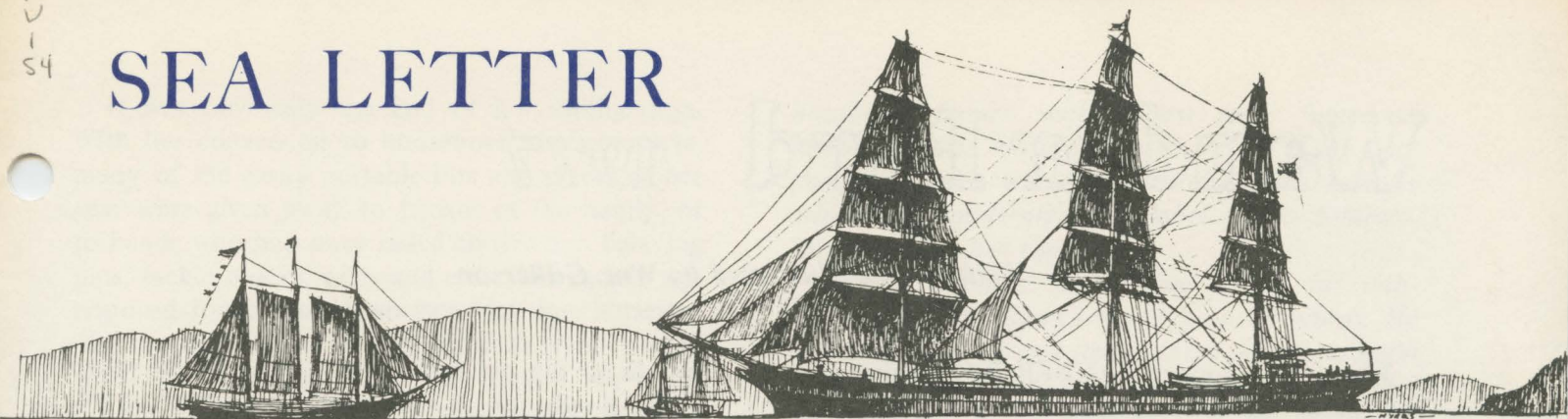


YU-54

SEA LETTER



OF THE SAN FRANCISCO MARITIME MUSEUM

Fall 1977
Number 28

Wandervogel

1879



Wander Bird 1977

Written and Illustrated by Wm. Gilkerson

When the schooner WANDER BIRD sailed into her Sausalito berth in 1941, she was a famous but very tired old ship. She was just back from a voyage to Tahiti. On her way home, she had fallen in with a hurricane that crippled a U.S. naval squadron, heavily damaging several of its ships (among them an aircraft carrier), a few miles from the schooner's position.

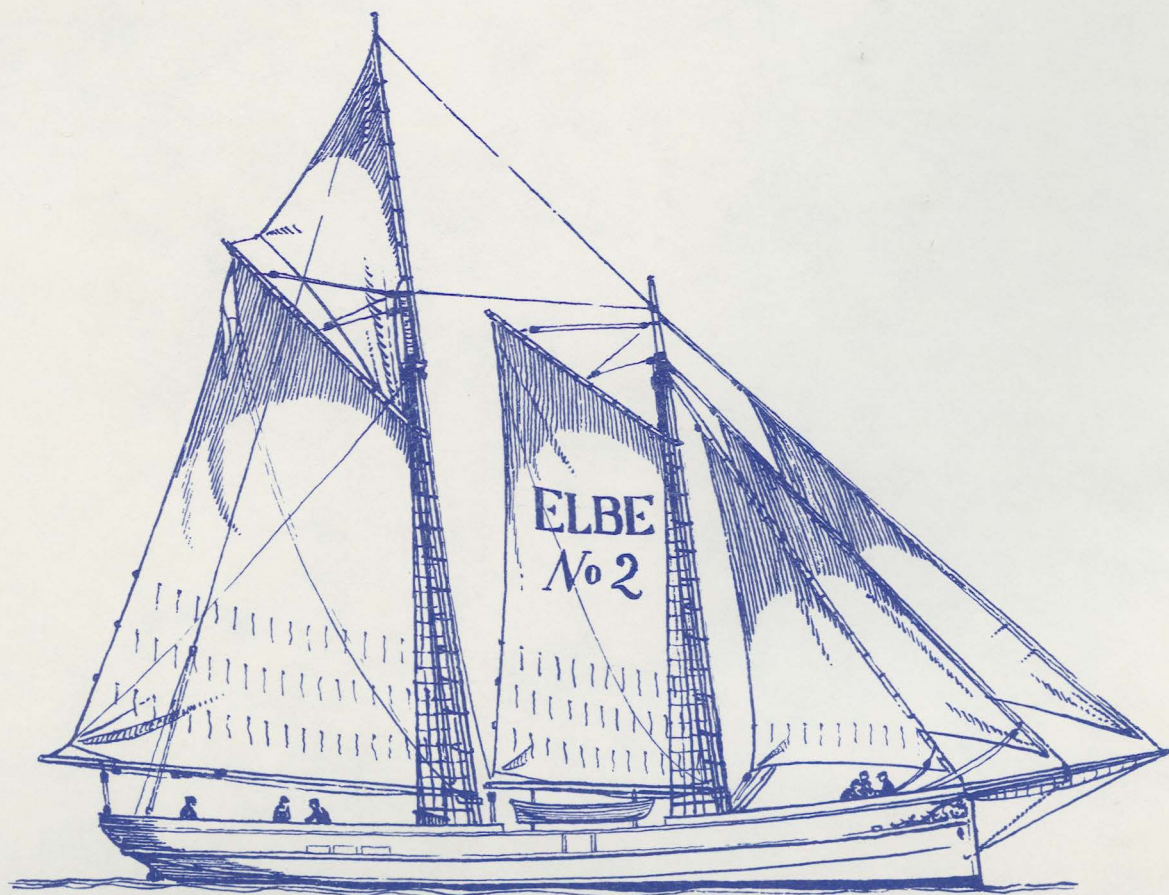
WANDER BIRD of course survived. She had been surviving the worst storms that the worst waters in the world could fling at her since her launching in 1879, and to her this was merely another hard old blow. It just made her all the more tired.

Tired, too, was her skipper, Warwick Tompkins. So home they came, the ship, the skipper and his family, home to Sausalito, the most recent of many

homes to the old boat. There she was tied up to settle tiredly into a mud berth in Madden's yard.

The usual post-voyage routine would find Tompkins bustling to fill the next charter list, finding the money for the mandatory haulout, refitting and victualing for the next voyage. But this time these familiar things did not happen. There was to be no next voyage. The ship felt again the carpenter's hammer and his saw, but for once they were readying her not for the sea, but for the land. Her long stern was roofed over and sided in.

Thus, she served the Tompkins family as a houseboat through World War II, and then during the years following. In 1952 her masts had to be cut off. Nobody felt very good about that, of course, but one had gone rotten, and the gear aloft on both was bad. Ralph Flowers did the job.



It was obviously the end of her sailing days. With her conversion to houseboat now complete, many of the easily portable bits and pieces of her gear were given away to friends of the family, or to hands who had once sailed aboard her: belaying pins, tackle blocks, odds and ends. Her rudder was removed for the San Francisco Maritime Museum. The remaining areas of exposed deck were covered with hot asphalt and tarpaper against the rains. Finally, in 1960, she was sold "as is" to land people, and her transition from a sea thing to a fixture of the shore seemed irrevocable.

During the subsequent decade she chaffed her old sides against the pilings. It would take the mud a long time to consume her bones, for the worms couldn't reach her skin through the copper plating, but the inexorable process was truly begun.

In 1969 she was sold again. For a song, as they say. Her new owner was Harold Sommer, a San Francisco Bay tug boat skipper. In his words: "I bought her for a low-cost house on the water." He adds:

"It didn't turn out that way."

Eight years have gone by since Harold acquired WANDER BIRD, and this month he celebrates the inside-and-out restoration of her hull to sailing condition. This is an accomplishment in which any well-funded and fully-staffed institution could take pride. The fact that Harold has achieved it as an individual (with a little help from his friends) is extraordinary.

Director's Note:

Just how extraordinary is something that Friends and Members of the San Francisco Maritime Museum will have a rare opportunity to see for themselves during the dates of September 16, 17, and 18 (see your enclosed invitation for details), when the Museum joins Harold and Anneliese Sommer in hosting an invitational WANDER BIRD open boat and on-board exhibit of marine art. The event celebrates the two-thirds-complete mark in WANDER BIRD's restoration. I want to add my own word about Harold Sommer. He is the greatest artist in wood—that is, maritime wood, disciplined wood—in the Bay Area, if not a wider geography. He has, like the New England ship-builders, "a Euclidean passion for useable, good-looking shapes." On a falling-apart old lumber schooner, I have seen him admire the lamb's tongues at the deckhouse corners, communing with

honest craftsmen with honest tools forged in another age by White or Drew. Harold is the only person I know who mourned for three months when they modernized the label on the Brilliant-shine metal polish can.

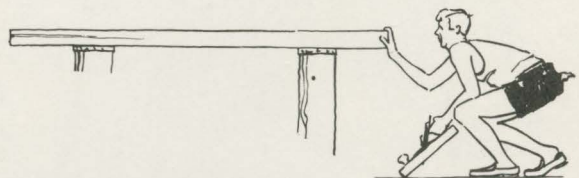
Harold Sommer is positive about his anti-quarianism. He doesn't waste time on words. He just goes to work and makes these old pieces again with his own hands. With a minimum of fuss and no ceremony at all. It is good to see the sharp-edged tools of White and Drew at work again.

WANDER BIRD's new masts are on hand, a contribution by sailor-novelist Ernest Gann, and the next major item on Harold's work list is their installation and rigging. Profits from the sale of oils, watercolors and prints (of sailing vessels along the California coast) by sailor-artist Wm. Gilkerson during the coming exhibit will go toward the massive expenses of wire, cordage and sails.

WANDER BIRD's continuing existence as a living ship and a school of the sea for youngsters is of immense value to our maritime community. This has inspired individuals such as Gann and Gilkerson, and many, many others as well as a few organizations, to contribute their energy to the project.

Of course the idea is to finish WANDER BIRD's restoration in time for the next obvious celebration—her 100th birthday in 1979, when we hope to see again her lantern-jawed bow slicing the waters of the Bay, the oldest working wooden pure sailing vessel in our land.

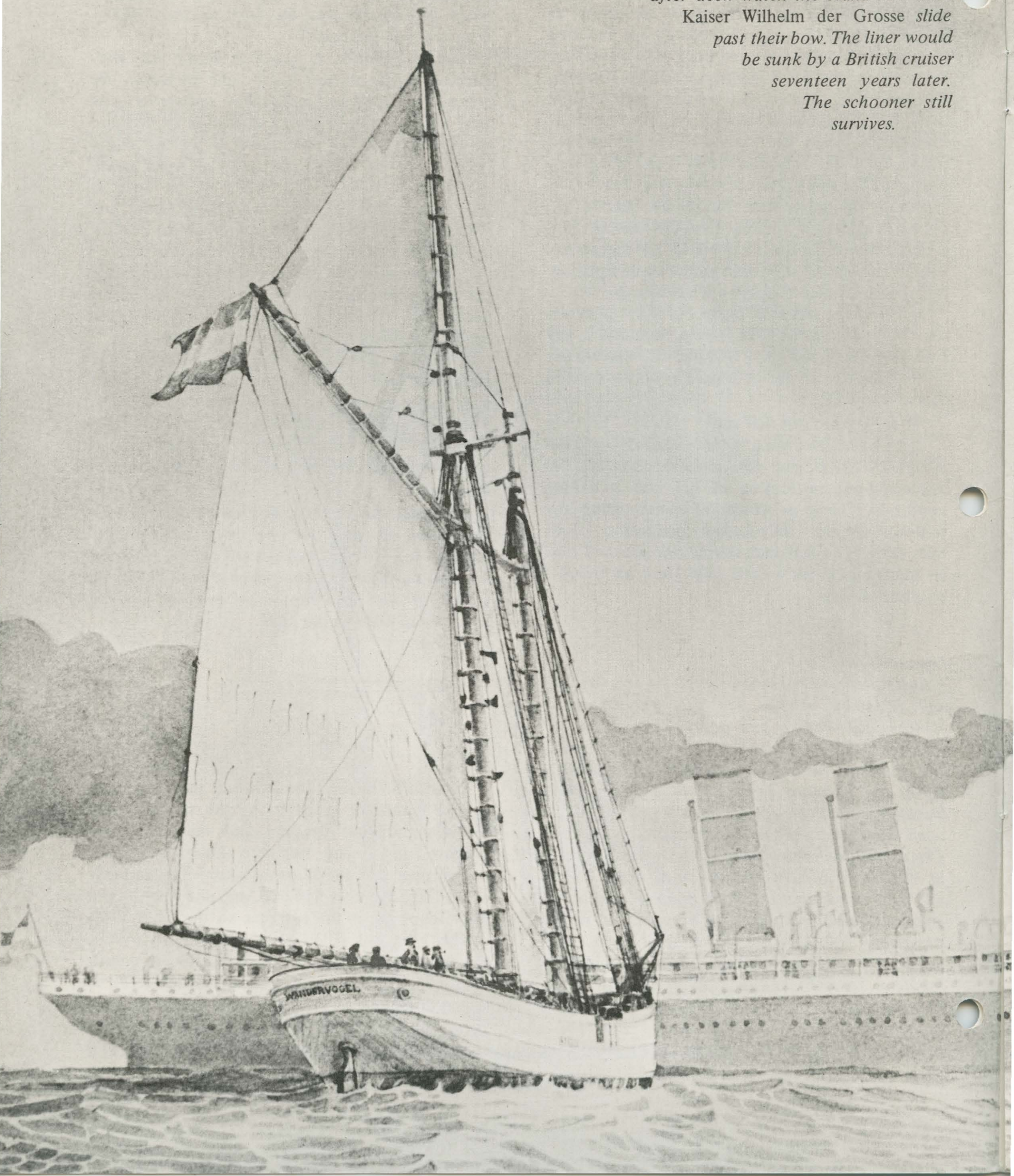
Karl Kortum



WANDERVOGEL, the schooner was christened at her launching in 1879. As she slipped down the ways of her designer and builder, young Gustav Junge, she was the finest vessel for her purpose that the Imperial German government could buy. She cost \$40,000, and she was to be a pilot schooner at the entrance to the River Elbe.

The Elbe was (then as now) Germany's most important sea artery, and, then as now, its mouth empties into one of the most dangerous areas of water in Europe. It is in the hook of the German Bight, the narrow end of the funnel for the north-westerly gales that rampage in from the North Sea,

Pilot schooner Wandervogel in the German Bight, 1897. Pipe-smoking pilots on the after deck watch the brand new liner Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse slide past their bow. The liner would be sunk by a British cruiser seventeen years later. The schooner still survives.



churning up the bottom sand until the whole ocean there boils yellow.

Engineless, WANDER BIRD was designed to keep station in the shallows of this extremely dangerous lee pocket and take care of herself in summer fogs or winter storms. She was designed to be fast and weatherly, so that she could beat to windward against the heaviest of seas, but still be comfortable enough for her crew (five men and a cook) and her cargo (up to eighteen pilots) to live aboard.

To these ends she was given a bow both hollow and sharp, permitting speed under way, without pounding when hove to. Her stem was built slightly past plumb, for lateral plane forward where she draws seven feet. Aft, she deepens to 10'6", when all her 35 tons of ballast are aboard. She measures 85' on deck, has a beam of 18'6", and displaces 138.26 tons.

This year WANDER BIRD is 98 years old. Her longevity is due in large measure to building techniques that have not been used for a very long time. For instance, pads of ship's felt were placed in every major structural joint, so the inevitable rot spots would not spread far. To further inhibit rot, and to pickle the wood against it, salt pockets were

built into the ship along the turn of her bilges.

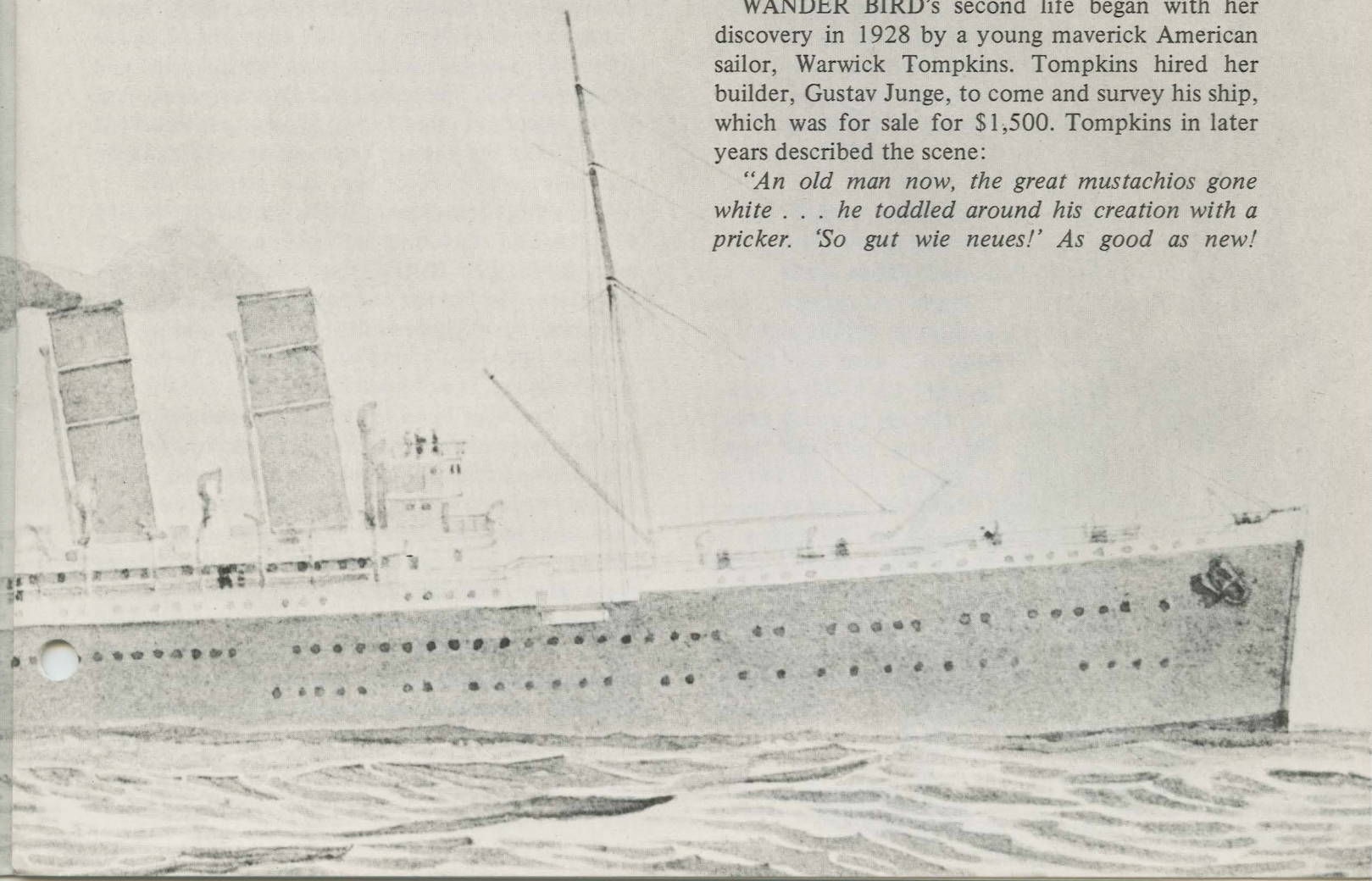
Her construction is massive. Her frames average 5½" x 6½" spaced in pairs an inch apart, with six inches between pairs. She is built all of oak but for her decks, which are pitch pine. Her planking is of 3" oak. The beams partnering the masts are 7" by 9". She is held together with treenails and bronze clinch fastenings. Her chain plates are of heavy Swedish black iron, faired into the frames under the planking and embracing the hull. There are heavy Swedish iron straps and knees throughout.

Her career as a pilot vessel lasted nearly half a century. During this span she tended clipper ships and colliers, whalers, coasters, liners and those most massive sailing ships of all, the four and five masted ships and barks of Hamburg's Laeisz "Flying P" Line. She watched ironclads steam past her station in her early days there, and in the later ones saluted Count von Luckner and dipped her colors to Admirals Scheer and Hipper.

In 1924 she was retired from service and sold, replaced by the inevitable motor vessel. For four years she lay in Hamburg, going nowhere, changing hands again and again. At last she was taken in a bankruptcy proceeding and scheduled to be burned for the bronze in her. So ended her first incarnation, although not with a torch.

WANDER BIRD's second life began with her discovery in 1928 by a young maverick American sailor, Warwick Tompkins. Tompkins hired her builder, Gustav Junge, to come and survey his ship, which was for sale for \$1,500. Tompkins in later years described the scene:

"An old man now, the great mustachios gone white . . . he toddled around his creation with a pricker. 'So gut wie neues!' As good as new!



He kept repeating as he jabbed here, jabbed there and found the oak as hard as iron. 'She is a gift at the price. I spent four times that amount for her copper sheathing and copper fastenings alone.'"

Tompkins bought her, and then borrowed ten times the amount of her purchase price to refit her. She seemed sound enough, but she needed much work: wiring, plumbing, carpentry, caulking, coppering, rigging, new tanks, new sails, the whole endless list.

He made very few changes in the vessel. Her big tackle-assisted tiller steering gear was replaced with a wheel. Amidships, where her boat skids had been, she was given a skylight. Below, a cook's cabin was added; aloft she received a yard for a squares'l and raffee, plus a few rigging innovations such as gaff bridles. The main topmast was replaced with a longer stick, and a foretopmast was added to match. Later these were shortened. Finished, she carried 5300 square feet of sail with everything up.

Tompkins had a ready ship but a pile of debts in a time when working sail was in its last twilight. Half-romantic idealist with a flair for the dramatic touch, half-pragmatist and working sailor, how was he to earn a living with WANDER BIRD?

His response to the predicament was to invent a



nautical life style which many have since copied, with greater or lesser success depending on their talents. Tompkins the romanticist found other romanticists who could afford to pay to sail in his ship, and Tompkins

the pragmatist worked them as relentlessly as any bucko mate, always charming them as he drove them.

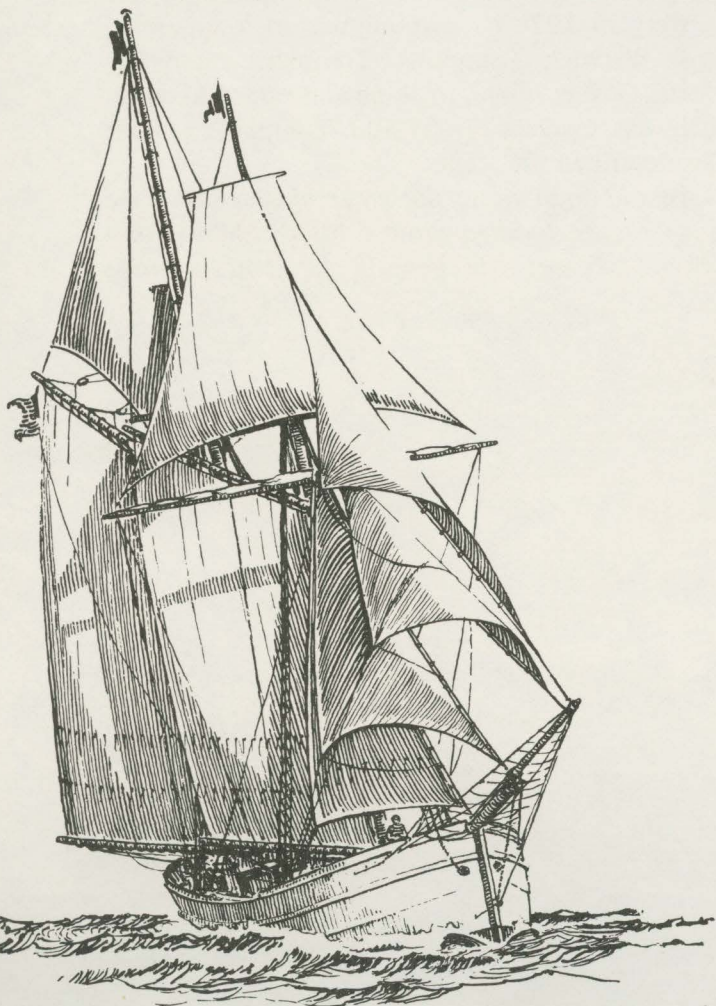
In all, some four hundred people were to supply what Tompkins referred to as "the cash and the muscle" to sail his ship on her wanderings.

Many of these were to become professional sailors. Probably the best-known of them is Irving Johnson, who sailed under Tompkins as deckhand and mate, and who met his wife aboard WANDER BIRD. When Johnson left that ship, he was to use the formula he had learned so well on WANDER BIRD aboard his YANKEEs. (The first of these was a Dutch-built pilot boat with many of WANDER BIRD's characteristics. Aboard her Sterling Hayden—another of Tompkin's students—sailed as first mate. This ship was followed by the steel brigantine YANKEE II, and finally YANKEE III, both of National Geographic fame.)

WANDER BIRD's shakedown cruise took her around the British Isles. Then her skipper pointed her bowsprit toward America, her new home. Altogether, they were to make together 13 North Atlantic passages, twice travel the length and breadth of the Baltic, sail the Mediterranean, and cruise most of the island groups of the West Indies, plus the eastern seaboard from Florida to Labrador.

By 1936, Tompkins's thirst for adventure had decided him upon the "ultimate test"; he would take WANDER BIRD from Gloucester to San Francisco, via Europe, Brazil and Cape Horn. His rationale is explained in his book about this voyage, *Fifty South to Fifty South* (W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., New York, 1938):

"A man who loves the sea and ships can aspire to no more searching test than a Horn Passage. It is the last word in the lexicon of sailormen. There nature has arranged trials and tribulations so ingeniously that in the van of all synonyms for sea cruelty and hardship is the iron-bound name of Cape Horn. Winds blow elsewhere at times as strongly as they do south of fifty. Seas elsewhere may pyramid as high, break as heavily. There may be places equally remote and as bleakly lonely. Currents in other regions may be as adverse.



These foes the sailorman may encounter separately or in pairs here and there, aye, encounter and best, but always in his heart he will wonder if he could face all combined. If he glories in the unequal contest of human muscles and artifices with the ocean, if the sea shouts an insistent challenge, he can never be truly content until he has voyaged from Fifty South in the Atlantic to Fifty South in the Pacific in his own command. This is the ultimate test, given to very few to know."

Off the Horn, Tompkins found his test, and his account of the voyage is a record of adversity, of storms and wild water, split sails, snow and sleet, foul currents, blasting winds, hungry black rocks. It is also a testimonial to his amazing ship:

"The sea is something phenomenal, its wildest excesses of all the yesterdays having at last been surpassed. We are assaulted now simultaneously on both sides, from dead ahead and from astern. How such a thing can be defies comprehension, but it is so. There is a savage swell from the north and an equally big one from the west. From the north-west, whence come these gales, the biggest and and main sea runs high. Cutting in, sprung from no one knows what, there is now and then a foaming bastard out of the south. Piling and heaping together, these superimposed giants tumble backward and forward and sideways in tumultuous rough-and-tumble.

"WANDER BIRD's usual slow and easy motion now is jerky, erratic and entirely unpredictable in this anarchist sea. Why she is not rent plank from plank is a mystery.

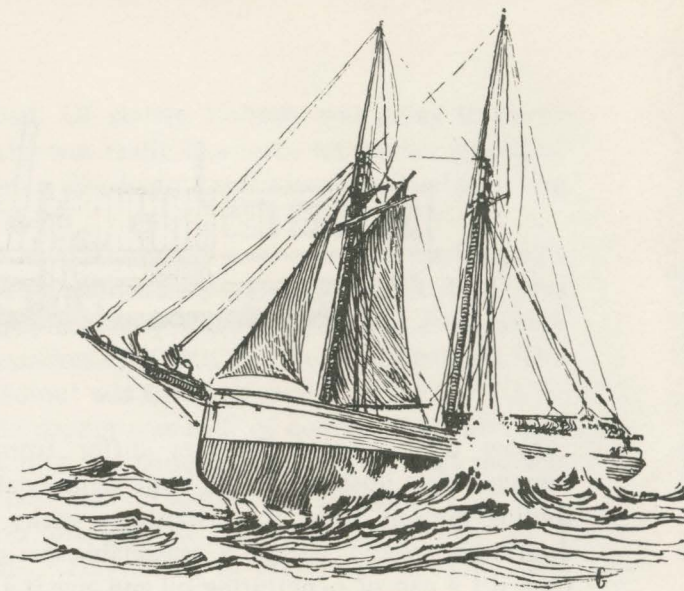
"The angling seas run to form deep hollows, only immediately to fill them brimming with their tumbling crests. The ship bravely fronts each hazard, balances briefly astride each lifting ridge and then falls a-crash into another sheer crater. Her jibboom and its furled sails plunge into solid water which thunders over the depressed bows to jet white against each obstruction."

And in another place:

"While we sleep, read and play, the ship shelters us, meeting with staunch bow and flanks the night's rage, anticipating the thrust of each sea and parrying it as gracefully as a fencer. From her comes no faintest murmur or complaint.

"The lookout on his rounds finds the gear all safe, each strand, fiber, atom and splinter working as ordained.

"From contemplation of this think for a moment of other ships which have passed this way! Think of



the square-riggers with flooded forecastles and heartbreaking work on dizzy yards. Consider their ill-clad, ill-fed men driven by masters blind to suffering and exhaustion. See how these seas brim with mischief! Others no different have shifted many a cargo and doomed many a ship to lingering death on her beam-ends. These squalls in no wise differ from those old ones so adept at catching square sails aback and uprooting, in an eye's wink, the entire vital forest of masts and yards. Hereabouts many an anguished seam has opened under unendurable stress, and many a pump has clogged and broken in unequal struggle with the ocean.

"11 p.m. Darkest night ever seen. Wind howling.

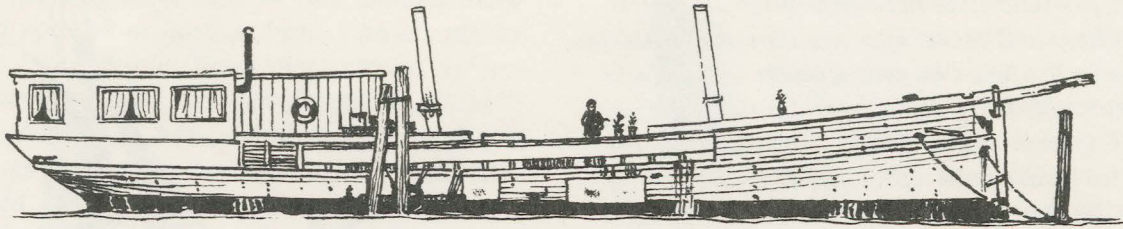
"12 midnight. No let up. Blowing like the devil.

"Still we sail in incongruous comfort. The ship is glorious."

San Francisco became WANDER BIRD's new home port. From here she was to sail the last five years of her sailing days under Captain Tompkins, still carrying her cargos of paying muscle power, voyaging mostly to Hawaii and back.

She had been a lucky ship. No death had ever been recorded on her, and Tompkins recalled the worst accident aboard as a broken leg. Only one hand had ever gone overboard, and he was retrieved. Her best logged day's work was 246 miles noon to noon. Her worst damage at sea happened in a gale off the Lizard, in the English Channel, when a rogue wave smashed into her weather side and carried away 23 feet of her heavy bulwarks.

Her final voyage in what we may call her second incarnation was to Tahiti in 1941. Thereafter she spent 28 years in the Sausalito mud awaiting her next rebirth.



How does Harold Sommer differ from the average ship's husband? Well, your usual boatman, finding himself with, for instance, a sticky brass doorknob, would within a reasonable period of time get a can of penetrating oil and give it a good old squirt into the works. He would then jiggle the knob, working-in the oil. This would probably help the sticky knob, and the repairer would retire, no doubt experiencing that modest feeling of virtue which comes to man in his moments of illusion that he has triumphed over those elemental forces that dog him inexorably in all his mechanical and philosophical endeavors. He would have a beer.

Confronted with this same sticky brass doorknob, Harold Sommer would remove the entire mechanism from the door, dismantle, examine and clean each piece of the assembly, probably re-making by hand the defective or worn part. This done, he would lubricate the works with a special brass lock lubricant not manufactured for the past 14 years, and then reassemble the device, possibly rebuilding it slightly, incorporating design improvements of his own invention. The whole would then be polished to a high state of lustre.

At this point it would become obvious to him that before an object of such magnificence could be reinstalled in the door, that door would have to be brought up to the quality of the doorknob assembly, meaning of course it would be dismounted, stripped of all layers of old varnish, tightened up a bit at the corners, replugged, have new panels applied and its mouldings replaced. It would then require better hinges, the appropriate style having to be especially obtained for it from a stock of used brass hinges in a little-known junk store in, say, Poulsbo, Washington. The door would then receive several sandings, rubbing, sealing, seven coats of varnish (each stroke of which would contain the anguish of love), and be rehung.

This gleaming portal would probably lead into a rag locker.

"I'll have to do something about fixing up that

rag locker," Harold would say restlessly, viewing it through the open doorway.

Harold Sommer is a tall man with a loose slouch and long arms. He was born in San Francisco and raised for the most part in Alameda. He lists his teachers as his father ("My old man was of the do-it-yourself school. He'd take on anything . . .") and an elderly boat-builder ("Charlie Mobis, an old fella who was an expert woodworker. In those days everything was built out of wood. He was also a good mechanic.")

In 1946, Harold went to work on the steam tug CREOLE. He worked as fireman and deckhand, and then got a mate's ticket. He has been a tug boat operator since 1956. For 20 of those years he skippered the SEA PRINCE, one of the last of the wooden tugs in a fleet gone mostly to steel.

Harold's first marine restoration project was the RESTLESS, a 30' steam launch. "I bought the hull for \$200, and I still think I got took, but I found a bunch of pieces and bits from long-deceased steam schooners and fixed her up."

National Fisherman writer and editor Brooks Townes describes the Sommer touch: "Better than new." So it was with RESTLESS. Between shifts on his tug boat, Harold's first meticulous restoration was completed, then sold, for the next project was at hand.

This was FREDa, a 32' gaff sloop. Launched in 1885, she is believed the oldest yacht on the West Coast. Harold acquired her in 1955. "She had a fair hull under the water, but aside from that she was bad all around. No masts, rigging, or bowsprit; a plywood galley with a big butane refrigerator. Awful. Peeled varnish all over the decks. Pretty rough."

How did he fix her up?

"Oh, a little here and a little there. You know."

The result was a fully-restored FREDa, historically accurate in detail, and in concourse condition inside and out. She is a museum yacht,

and is still in Harold's hands. He did not sell her when he bought WANDER BIRD. FREDa was still to be his boat; the schooner hull would be his house.

Into it he moved with his gentle and beautiful new bride, Anneliese, the woman spirit of the ship and an endless polisher of old brass.

Aboard his new vessel:

"It was unbelievable. Everything gone to heck. Leaks everywhere. There was tarpaper over her decks, then plywood and more tar on top of the tarpaper. A double mess. Her sides were all patched up with sheets of tin and plywood, where she'd been gouged by her pilings. That was the first job, getting her properly moored. She hadn't been tied up right in years. Next I had no choice but to go after the leaks. You had to watch out how you walked around, or you might put your foot through the cabin sole. Awful. And her copper was paper-thin.

"Well, I thought I'd just try to get the hull into as good a condition as I could. Then as I got to looking at her, it didn't look like she was really all

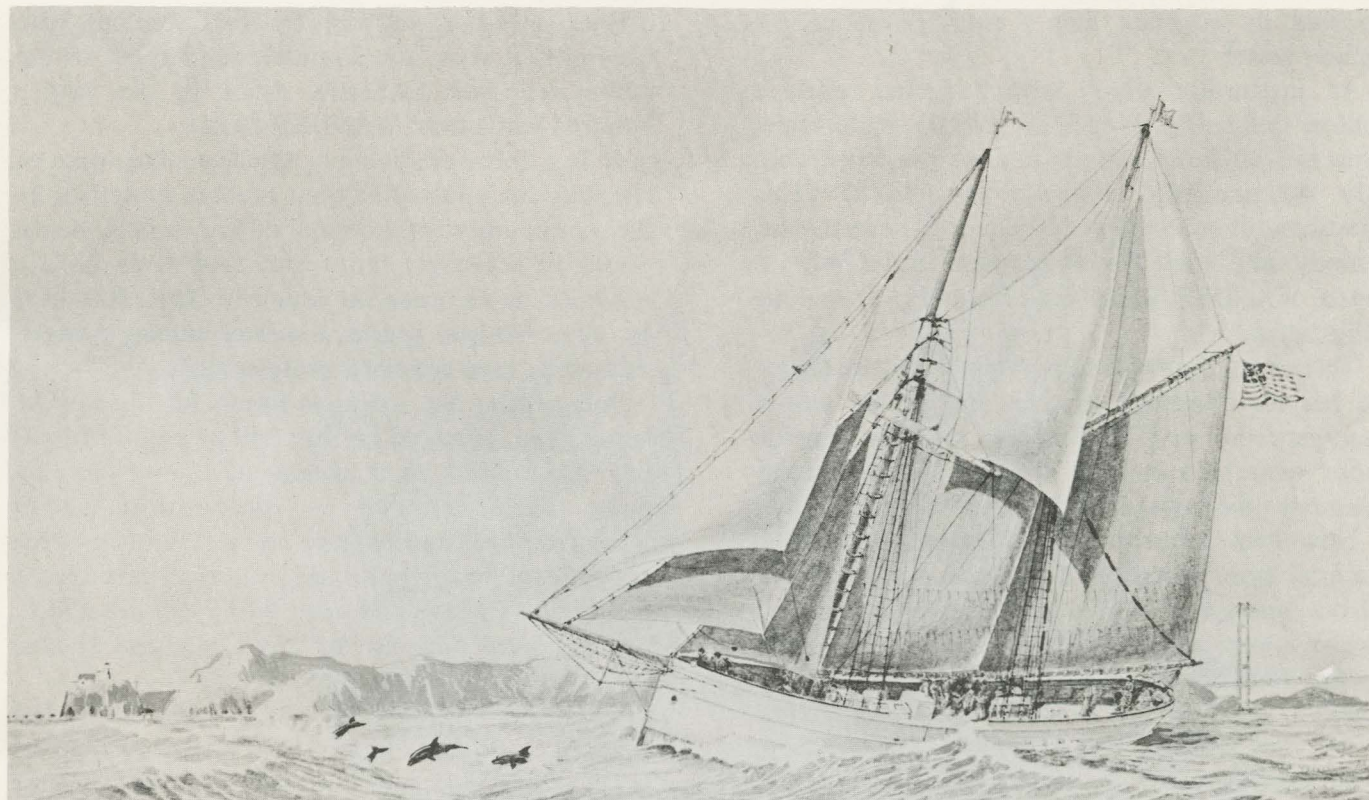
that bad. Of course, nobody was going to know what she was really like until we got her up out of the water. She hadn't had a haulout in a long, long time."

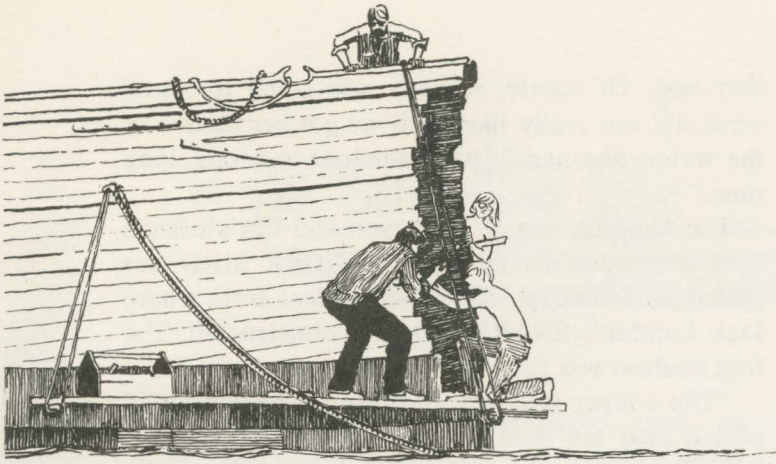
The haulout was at Anderson and Christofani's Yard at Hunter's Point, and WANDER BIRD was pulled up to occupy a spot a few feet from where Jack London's SNARK had been constructed. The first haulout was for a self-service survey.

"The copper was bad, of course. The worm had gotten into the shoe, but aside from that she was OK. There was no appreciable hogging of her hull, and no unexpected catastrophes showed up. I thought, 'This thing is pretty good.' That first haulout turned the project around."

The first major work was the decks. First one bad section was replaced, then another. When the rains prevented this work, the one-little-perfect-thing-at-a-time process when on within. The ungainly house over the afterdeck became a workshop with benches, power tools and materials. A new scuttle appeared here, a ladder there, a grating, a moulding, a rosette, a cabinet and then suddenly

BEATING OUT the Golden Gate, bound for Hawaii, WANDER BIRD shows a glimpse of forefoot. In 1930 John Alden had examined her and pronounced: "I consider WANDER BIRD the best-designed and best-built vessel of her size in America."





one sunny day there was Harold directing a swarm of youthful zealots tearing the stem out of his ship.

"That stem was the toughest job. It had gone soft under the stump of the old bowsprit which we had removed. We started digging it out and it was more rotten than I had figured. I thought, 'Holy Cow, what have I gotten into here?' But then the rot stopped four feet or so above the water line, so it was OK. We replaced it and the apron and the breasthook. After that we did the cabin sole, then the portside bulwarks, which we completely replaced."

Such problems have been manageable only when dealt with one at a time, but if viewed all at once would (and still do) seem boggling. So at that time Harold was still reluctant to admit that he was involved in anything like a total fix-up of the ancient vessel.

An institution would have budgeted nearly a million dollars for WANDER BIRD's restoration. How was an individual to finance the work with only his tug boat skipper's pay check? (This question still hovers over the project.) Nevertheless, nobody who knew Harold doubted that if only life lasted, WANDER BIRD would one day spread her wings again.

Then, too, Harold *is* something of an institution. He has no credential as such, but he has always been generous with his time and his knowledge to those who have needed his help, from Sunday boaters to the boys around the harbor.

Now help returned from all quarters: a bit of material here, a contribution there, and here came all the young men of the harbor—boys no longer—to give a hand with WANDER BIRD, bringing back to her the developed boat skills and knowledge which in many cases they had learned from Harold.

"It was unbelievable. The work became an attraction and drew a lot of good people. It was

like the restoration of the BALCLUTHA. It snow-balled until my paycheck couldn't even finance the sandwiches and beer for the people working for free. And even then they kept coming: policemen, lawyers, hippies, insurance salesmen, dishwashers, electricians, good lookin' girls . . . I wouldn't know how to figure the labor. Some of the people who have worked on her are so skilled there would be no way of paying them."

Harold particularly credits the carpentry projects to his son, Ross, and to Cliff Niederer, Billy Martinelli, Kit Africa, Dick Corville and Ralph Flowers.

Brooks Townes, one of the volunteer workers at her second haulout likens the occasion to a Menonite barn-raising where dozens of hands worked frenziedly while the women prepared giant meals. WANDER BIRD got her new shoe, caulking and refastening where needed and more copper.

Among the ship's gear that had vanished without a trace over the years was the heavy log windlass. It was gone from the bows, and nobody knew where, despite many efforts to track it down. It had to be replaced.

Fortunately, there survives a Lunenburg iron foundry retaining patterns of castings it once made for fishing schooners, and from this place it was possible to obtain new old-windlass castings of the correct specifications. The wooden barrel for the half-ton monster was built by Ross Sommer, who fashioned it from the ironbark rudderpost of the motor schooner LASSEN, dying in the mud a hundred yards from WANDER BIRD.

It is a form of divining, this legendary nose of Harold's for unusual or even obscure materials. In the community of keepers of old sailing boats, where to scavenge, ferret and find is as basic a necessity as an ocean on which to float, Harold is an acknowledged genius, a master among masters, studied by even seasoned professionals.

Augmenting the treasures found for the ship by her skipper, some of her bits and pieces of original gear given away as souvenirs have been coming home again, returned as contributions. Other relics from other ships have come also, such as the magnificent hanging brass oil lamp that once graced the master's quarters aboard STAR OF FRANCE, brought over one day by Herb Madden. It now swings in WANDER BIRD's saloon.

Below, the schooner is still a thing of the last century, with everywhere the bright twinkle of brass against dark panelling, and she would seem a

museum were she not so comfortably lived in by Harold, Anneliese, Ross and their two dogs.

Aft are master's and mate's cabins. As no space is sacrificed to a motor, they are very roomy. They are reached by twisting companionway steps, at the bottom of which is a full-sized chart table in a kind of navigator's lobby.

This communicates with the main saloon, a chamber with an unbroken run of 33 feet, lined port and starboard with its original pilot berths. The gimbed table is long enough to seat 18 or 20 card-playing, pipe-smoking German pilots, or the same number of young crewmen. As it was in Captain Tompkins's day, so may it be again.

Forward is the cook's cabin, and the galley, with its coal-converted-to-oil Aga stove, burning day and night. Harold's varnished cabinetry here follows the compound curves of sheer line and ship's side. The galley is 18 feet long.

Forward of it is the forepeak, which is to include bosun's locker and work shop when ultimately the aft deck structure is removed.

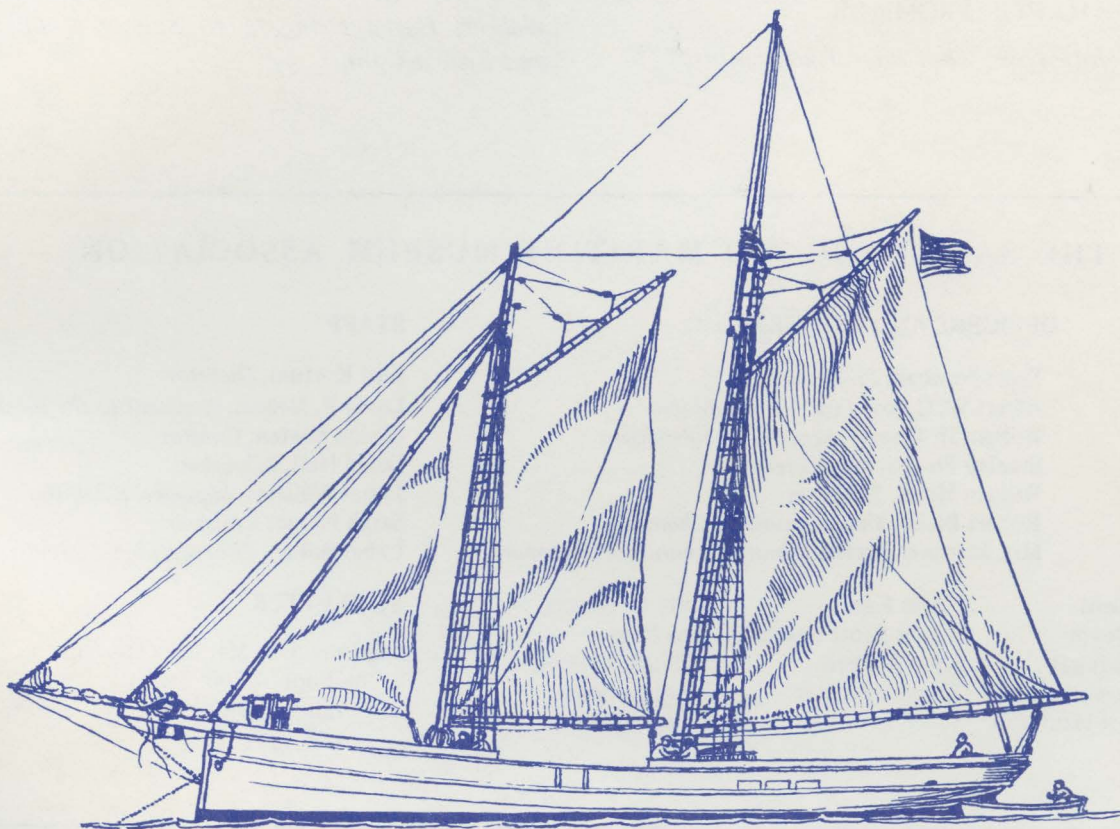
This event grows closer. The masts are on hand; two Douglas firs measuring some 14" in diameter at deck level, and 76' in length. Harold plans to

step them soon after the upcoming exhibit, which it is hoped will generate sufficient new funds toward the rigging.

WANDER BIRD's finished rig will return her closely to her original appearance as a pilot schooner. Her foremast will again be bald-headed. Gone will be the square yard of Tompkins's day. She will carry a yawl boat from davits positioned where they were when she was "Elbe 2." This tender will be motorized to serve her as harbor tug and shore boat.

The hull is all but finished. The last heavy woodwork there was the systematic replacement of waterways and large areas of topside planking that had been gouged by pilings or just gone soft. This work has occupied the past couple of years, during which time WANDER BIRD has worn scaffolding, the gap-toothed smiles of missing planking, and a patchwork appearance of new wood and caulking.

Here (as in the other areas worked on) where frames or the structural timbers were replaced, it has been by cutting and scarfing rather than by sistering and scabbing. Finally the topsides have been fared by hand with jackplanes ("You can't do a good job with power sanders and putty."), and





HAROLD SOMMER

"I thought, 'Holy cow, what have I gotten into?'"

painted. Her only blemishes are some long scars just above the waterline.

"She's had those marks in her from her days in the North Sea, and she's carried them all over the world," Harold explains. "It's where she was scored up by ice. I decided to leave those planks alone."

We recall that among Teutonic warriors, cosmetic scars were worn with pride.

Harold's appraisal of his work, looking back at the project so far?

"I think she's better now that she's repaired than she was in the twenties and thirties. It's obvious that some of the problems we've corrected were with her even then. Now we're going to get her going again, and make her pay for herself somehow, with younger fellows making trips on her again, as in Warwick's day."

A pause.

"She should be good for another 50 years or so now."

A salute to all those who have contributed energy or material to WANDER BIRD's restoration would include too many names to list here, but besides those people already mentioned, especially valuable help in one form or another has come from the Tompkins family, Sterling Hayden, Penny Gerbode, Jack Witter, Steve Hopper, George Walker, Harry Dring, Fred Schaefer, and George and Ernest Gann.

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SEA LETTER

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